

31. Notes on Colour Development in the Indian Wood-Stork. By GEORGE JENNISON, Belle Vue Gardens, Manchester\*.

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On June 2nd, 1908, a specimen of *Pseudotantalus leucocephalus*, which I judged to be six months old, came to Belle Vue Gardens with other stock. It was at that time not more than half its present weight, the beak was straight and rather slender, pale yellow in colour. The pinions were of a dull black, the rest of the plumage a yellowish white. The bird ate fish freely, and has not had a day's illness or check of any kind, so we may assume its subsequent development to be normal. The first change was noted in February 1909, when the feathers on the larger wing-coverts were slightly tinged with pink. During the next three years, that is until the spring of 1912, there was a continual change of the yellowish to ever whiter body-feathers, for the moult is extremely gradual and the new plumes make quite a checkered pattern with the old: the dull black of the pinions and tail took on a lustrous greenish tinge, and the bare skin of the head became red where it meets the feathers of the neck.

These changes might pass unnoticed by a casual observer, but in January 1912 a drastic alteration supervened which could not fail to attract attention. The white feathers of the smaller and median wing-coverts of the chest and underparts of the wings were slowly replaced by black feathers, with a narrow edge of white. The perfection of plumage was reached in May, when the whole of the shoulder was a wavy pattern of brilliantly contrasted broad black and narrow white, and the bird in flight showed the same beautiful coloration on the chest and beneath the wings.

The beak changes slowly, first thickening and afterwards taking a pronounced downward curve, which continues to develop long after the plumage-change is completed; its colour changes meanwhile to a deep shiny wax-like yellow. During this time the skin of the head, which can be drawn back an inch or more, also continues to develop until the forehead and cheeks are a deep yellow-umber and the hinder part of the head becomes a rich purple.

The legs are now (1914) showing signs of a remarkable alteration; for five years they were grey with a slight tinge of pink on the toes, the upper half of the tarsus is now a deep magenta-red.

\* Communicated by the SECRETARY.